

# Canine Bulletin

Nebraska Task Force - 1

June 2000



## ***“Flirt”***

***December 1, 1986 - May 16, 2000***

***Owned by Elaine Sawtell***

***Submitted by: Elaine Sawtell***

She didn't go to Oklahoma City or the Kansas Grain Elevator explosion or Macedonia.

She would have failed the “burn building” test.

She didn't have what it takes to be a disaster search dog... or did she?

She spent her first year tied to a dog house. Kids fresh off the school bus teased her. Teenage kids on motorcycles terrorized her. More than once, the neighbor hit her with a ball bat for barking. Her owners proudly told me they would “pull her out of her dog house and pet her every day.”

When she was given to me at 13 months, she knew how to jump fences and hunt. She knew as long as you're on a leash or a chain, you're “caught”. She trusted no one.

Her passion was hunting. We lived at the lake, and she caught moles, mice, rabbits and birds on the fly. Not too many years back she broke her toe on Easter Sunday chasing the Easter bunny. (She caught him.)

We did our AKC obedience the Anne Marie Silverton way, and she was attentive and precise. She was happy and willing. She was solid on out-of-sight stays. We never entered an AKC show, though. She didn't trust people.

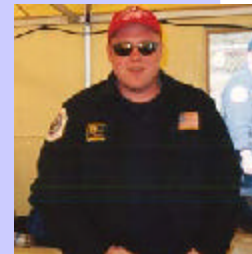


*“Flirt” Continued on page 3*

## ***Renny “The Now Certified “Duh” Dog” Jones***

***Submitted by Eric Jones***

Well as most of you have heard, Ren and I have finally passed the Type II FEMA test in Boulder, CO. Evaluating the test were Shirley Hammond, LaFond Davis, and Amy Rising. Ren and I passed the first day of the test on June 17<sup>th</sup>.



You know the best part about this test was that Renny really aced this one. If we had barely passed I wouldn't feel nearly as good. Ren and I left early Thursday morning in hopes of getting some good acclimation time prior to the test. I knew that I was very stressed about the test, and I wanted some time with just me and him to clear the air. I didn't want my stress feeding down the leash. We spent some time in the park, did a little obedience, but other than that we spent most of the time in our hotel room. Ren did not show the stress that I felt, he spent most of his time asleep on my bed or eating the cookies that the hotel staff continued to feed him. Not knowing what the weather would be like the day of the test, I also placed some importance on really keeping him hydrated for the long day.

Obedience went extremely well. We started with the aggression test. Ren didn't get bit this time! Figure 8 and tie out went fine with all canines passing. Good news to Ren and I. His heel during the test was the absolute best ever! Puddles were literally going over his head he stopped so fast on his drop on recall. All canines passed the down stay. To this point all canines had passed which is the first to my knowledge. We were able to take a small break, I kenneled Ren, and really started feeling comfortable with the test. I was thinking to myself that this is fun, and that is really how we attacked the rest of the test.

*Ren Continued on page 4*

## ***The Phone Call***

***(Taped With Permission of Ditto)***

*Submitted by Elaine Sawtell*

*Ren:* Hullo?

*Ditto:* Hello, Ren?

*Ren:* Yeah.

*Ditto:* This is Ditto. Listen...

*Ren:* D..D..Ditto? You're call ME long distance?

*Ditto:* Well, my mom has all these free minutes. So it's not, like, COSTING me anything. Anyway...

*Ren:* But...but last time I saw you you bit me in the...

*Ditto:* REN! Shut up and listen. You Labs are all alike.

Anyway, I heard that you saved two people out in Colorado. I...I wanted to tell you you did a good thing.

*Ren:* Oh, Ditto, it was so neat. My dad and I went for this long car ride...you know, he drove too fast, ate lots of junk food and played the CD real loud...but I could TELL he was nervous. He SMELLED funny. You know how humans..

*Ditto:* Yes, well, thank you for sharing that, but you must learn humans sometimes THINK too much about things, and then they begin to worry and...well, never mind. What am I DOING...trying to explain the concept of "though" to a LAB!

*Ren:* Oh, but we had the BEST time, Ditto. We did that boring stuff, obedience, which Dad says I never have to do again, and I got to bark at someone in one of those barrels, and I ran and jumped on stuff and crawled through things and THEN we got to do my favorite thing...run around on rocks and look for buried humans.

*Ditto:* Hold on, hold on, Ren. That's what I want to talk to you about. FINDING PEOPLE is the most important job there is. You must remember that. Sometimes no one and nothing can find them but us!!

*Ren:* Really, Ditto?

*Ditto:* Yes, Ren. It's more important than...let's see, how can I explain it to you...more important than finding...hot dogs. Or even BUNNIES, soft, warm, furry, squeaky...



*Continued on page 3*



## Deploy Able Canine Teams

Submitted by John Huff

1. Max/McAlister (Type I)(Cadaver)(recertify 8/01)
2. Louie/Rising (Type II (Cadaver)(eligible to retake Type I)
3. Ren/Jones (Type II)(recertify 6/02)
4. Zima/Barger (Type II)(recertify 10/00)
5. Ditto/Sawtell (not certified-Category 2)(Cadaver)

*Continued from page 2*

**Ren:** Yeah, Ditto, I know what you mean. It's our JOB!

**Ditto:** Yes, son.

**Ren:** I can't wait to see you and tell you all about our excellent adventure.

**Ditto:** Yes, I'm anxious to hear about it. But Ren...

**Ren:** Yes, Ditto?

**Ditto:** You can get excited, but remember, STAY OUT OF MY FACE!

**Ren:** Yes, ma'am. And ma'am, thank you for calling. It means so much that you...

**Ditto:** OH! Got to go! I just heard the refrigerator door open and chance is already halfway to the kitchen! 'Bye!

**Ren:** Good-bye, Ditto, Ma'am...



*"Flirt" Continued from page 1*

She did have an official title. In 1989 she was one of eleven Dobermans in the country to pass the AKC Tracking Dog test. With her love of hunting game, it was a measure of her train ability, following a human track with only a glove at the end.

I often wondered what she could have been without those early life experiences. She was agile and smart. She slept on the floor by my bed and could cover herself completely, nose to tail, with her blanket. She was good natured. She was Ditto's first and only playmate. She wasn't afraid of vacuum cleaners, loud noises, thunderstorms or other dogs... just people. She was beautiful. In spite of her almost 14 years, she had a wonderful dark coat, without a single gray hair.

She never flew in cabin (or in cargo), but she hiked in most states west of the Mississippi from Mexico to the Canadian border.



A friend sent me a note. It said, "because of you, she had a wonderful life." Maybe so. But as is the case with dogs, given the chance, they give much more to us.



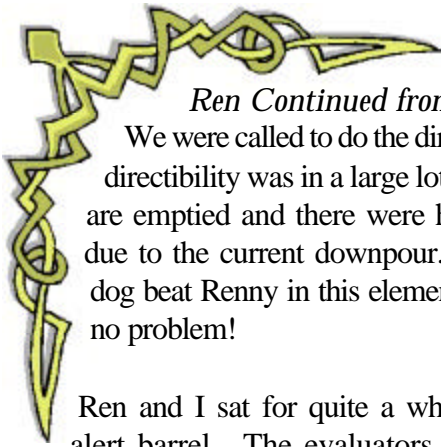
Canine  
Bulletin



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### *Ren Continued from page 1*

We were called to do the directibility element. The directibility was in a large lot where street sweepers are emptied and there were huge puddles of water due to the current downpour. I do believe that no dog beat Renny in this element. He flew through it, no problem!

Ren and I sat for quite a while in the rain for the alert barrel. The evaluators were laughing while Ren attempted to rip the lid from the barrel and dug up 20 yards of sand. He was great, I was so proud! I was wondering if Ren was turning into a Louie/Crack dog.

A few butterflies began to form prior to the agility. I knew that LaFond (evaluator) had one of the best agility dogs around, and frankly I was afraid to see what hellish agility obstacles she had dreamed up. Upon arrival to the agility there was a large crowd of spectators sitting close by. I was told the layout for the course by the Evaluators and was instructed to begin the elements. I dried Rens paws and stared up the most horrible ladder I have ever seen. That wasn't the prettiest ladder climb I thought to myself as Ren reached the high plank, but, it was now water under the bridge. We did our slow turn and stop on the high plank which was at minimum, trust me, the regulation 8 feet high. Ren finished the obstacle with one of his infamous job over your head to the heal position maneuvers. At this point the entire crowd and evaluators were laughing at us. This really put us at ease. The rest of the obstacles included a bunch of box springs and a turned chain link fence, teeter, tunnel, and an unstable surface. Several canines had a problem with the ladder. Denver firefighters who were watching the agility made sure to comment on how the duh firefighter lab barreled up the ladder just like a duh firefighter.

Ok, now for the main event. Sound like WWF huh? Ren and I were picked as the fourth team to do our rubble search. The day prior a backhoe was acquired to mix up the pile so as to create something nobody had seen before. The result was a rubble pile that had not only new visual and physical characteristics, but, new scent problems as well. By the time we got to the rubble, the skies had cleared and the temperature risen to around 80 degrees. Ren and I stood waiting our turn for 45 minutes to an hour ready to go. Both victims were changed out just prior to our entering the test

area. Wind was calm. I put Ren on his down stay and completed my interview without a problem. I sent Ren from the specified starting point and Ren alerted on the first victim in about one and a half minutes. Ren penetrated well allowing me to easily pinpoint the scent source. Again he was downed and given some water. Conditioning paying off now eh? Sent Ren on the second victim, some difficulty in picking up the scent due to minimal air movement. We were off the pile in about six and a half minutes. The evaluator came over to the staging area and told us that Ren and I had passed.

I want to give a special thanks to all of the members both locally and out of state. It is always everyones victory when one of our canines succeed. It is you all who train my dog, I just drive the car and feed him. Thanks also to the Lincoln Fire Department. We are the best funded and supported canine handlers in the country, and I am appreciative of that. It really was the greatest challenge I have ever faced, and I'm looking forward to taking Ren as far as he wants to go. Thanks everyone!

### Submission of Items for the "Canine Bulletin"...

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